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Ministry of Advanced Education

NEW TRADES & TECHNOLOGY CENTRE OPENS ITS DOORS AT UCFV

CHILLIWACK – B.C.'s largest recycled training facility – the $21.6-million Trades and Technology Centre at the University College of the Fraser Valley's new campus in Chilliwack – officially opened today. Advanced Education Minister Murray Coell, Environment Minister and Chilliwack-Kent MLA Barry Penner, and Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General and Chilliwack-Sumas MLA John Les were on hand to open the centre.

"Our booming economy means we need more skilled workers than ever before, which is why increasing trades training in B.C. is a high priority for our government," said Coell. "Every time we invest in skilled workers, it keeps our economy competitive and benefits everyone in the province."

The 2.5-acre Trades and Technology Centre is part of the Canada Education Park, a collaborative initiative between local, provincial and international schools. The centre offers students a wide variety of high-quality programs, including architectural drafting, heavy duty commercial transport, automotive services, hospitality and event planning, electronics, professional cooking, carpentry, welding, joinery, and electrical work.

"This new building is part of our master plan for the new campus, which will ultimately allow us to double the number of students we service in Chilliwack," said UCFV president Skip Bassford. "This is great news for our local economy since Chilliwack's business-friendly environment is attracting a lot of new companies that all require skilled workers."

UCFV is aiming to have 1,800 students on the new Canada Education Park campus by 2010, meeting the needs of both employers and students.

The building has a number of state-of-the-art features, including a professional dining room, a highly automated computer numerical control machine used for delicate woodworking in the carpentry/joinery shop, a heavy-duty hoist capable of lifting a city bus and the first programmable robotic welding arm to be used in a training facility in Western Canada.

"As a former UCFV student, I'm very proud of the new campus and I'm especially impressed by UCFV's commitment to ensuring the building has a low carbon footprint," said Penner. "Our government's actions to reduce British Columbia's greenhouse gas emissions by 33 per cent by 2020 include making our public post-secondary buildings carbon neutral by 2010."

The centre was built within the shell of an existing building, using large portions of recycled material. UCFV also used some Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standards in the design of the building. Electrical and mechanical systems were also designed to be energy efficient.

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In addition to the Trades and Technology Centre building, the Province is funding 1,700 new student spaces at UCFV as part of its seat expansion plan.

Since 2001, the Province has provided more than $1 billion in new funding for 904 capital projects on campuses throughout B.C. and has allocated almost $700 million in capital funding over the next three years to accommodate further growth. To date, the Province has also funded almost 16,000 new seats at B.C.'s universities, colleges, and university colleges.

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